AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1 - 27, as set forth below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the Application:

Claim 1 (currently amended): [[Method]] A method for preventing fraud in coin-operated or banknote-operated vending machines, in particular vending machines dispensing goods or services, in which provision of said goods or services is initiated once ~~the sale transaction after inserting~~ coins and/or banknotes ~~is initiated when a~~ of sufficient credit value are inserted ~~is reached and the said service is provided, characterised in that~~ the method comprising the steps of:

determining the denominations of the coins or banknotes ~~i.e. the number type, is determined~~ for each transaction ~~numerical procedure~~, wherein the ~~number types or denomination types~~ denominations that were inserted until a specified credit value (K) was reached are determined[[,]] ;

~~that~~ counting the ~~number types or denomination types are added in number type~~ denominations in denomination counters (Z)[[,]] ;

~~that~~ generating a signal (F) when a predetermined limit criterion of successive equivalent denomination coins or banknotes is reached; ~~a signal (F) is generated, and~~

~~that~~ passing the signal (F) ~~is passed~~ to a logic circuit; and

activating a time element (T) ~~is activated~~ that at least partially prevents [[the]] operation of the vending machine for a duration (T_{inop}).

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Claim 2 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the initial value (Z_x) of the ~~number type counters~~ denomination counter (Z) in which the signal (F) is generated is adjustable ~~can be adjusted~~.

Claim 3 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ further comprising resetting said denomination counter (Z) when ~~with~~ successive coins and/or banknotes are inserted having ~~numerical procedures involving~~ different denominations~~, i.e. with different number types, the number type denomination counter (Z) is reset~~.

Claim 4 (currently amended): [[Method]] A method for preventing fraud in coin-operated or banknote-operated vending machines, in particular vending machines dispensing goods or services, in which provision of said goods or services is initiated once ~~the sale transaction after inserting~~ coins and/or banknotes ~~is initiated when a~~ of sufficient credit value are inserted ~~is reached and the said service is provided, characterised in that~~ the method comprising the steps of:

determining the coin or banknote denominations~~, i.e. the number type, is determined~~ for each transaction ~~numerical procedure~~, wherein the ~~types of~~ denominations of coins or banknotes that were inserted until a specified credit value (K) was reached are determined[[,]];

~~that~~ calculating the frequency with which ~~identical~~ equivalent denominations of coins or banknotes were inserted ~~in the case of~~ during a plurality of sale transactions ~~is determined,~~;

~~that~~ generating a signal (F) when a preset limit criterion of equivalent denomination frequency is reached; ~~a signal (F) is generated, and~~

~~that~~ passing the signal (F) ~~is passed~~ to a logic circuit; and

activating a time element (T) ~~is activated~~ that at least partially prevents the operation of the vending machine for a duration (T_{inop}).

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Claim 5 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the time element (T) comprises a time function ($TF_{(p)i}$) whose behavior (duration, nature and manner) ~~can be~~ is described by parameters.

Claim 6 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of activating ~~the logic circuit, i.e.~~ the time element (T) further comprises preventing ~~, acts in such a way on a coin or banknote checking device that the~~ acceptance of coins or banknotes of ~~this value~~ a specific denomination ~~is prevented~~ for a duration (T_{inop}).

Claim 7 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the duration (T_{inop}) of the time element (T) is adjustable ~~can be adjusted~~.

Claim 8 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the duration (T_{inop}) of the time element (T) has an incremental function, ~~wherein~~ whereby the duration ~~time~~ in the case of successive attempts to commit fraud is in each case extended.

Claim 9 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that the~~ further comprising measuring a time interval (T_v) between two successive sale transactions; ~~is measured~~ and

generating a signal (F) that prevents the operation of the vending machine for a duration (T_{inop}) ~~that~~ if a preset time ($T_{v\text{-}v}$) is not reached in one [[or]] of a predetermined number (A_v) of sale transactions (ΣT_v)~~, a signal (F) is generated that prevents the operation of the vending machine and consequently the sales for a duration (T_{inop})~~.

Claim 10 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein ~~the times~~ a time interval (T_v) between two successive sale transactions is

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measured and, [[that]] in the case of several successive sale transactions, a [[their]] total time (T_{vs}) is determined, further comprising:

[[that]] comparing the time interval (T_{vs}) ~~is compared~~ to a limiting value ($(T_{max})_n$), and

[[that]] generating the signal (F) if [[this]] the limiting value is not reached ~~a signal (F) is generated that prevents the operation of the vending machine and consequently the sales for a duration (T_{inop})~~.

Claim 11 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 9, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the time (T_{v-v}) ~~and/or ($(T_{max})_n$)~~ is adjustable ~~can be adjusted~~.

Claim 12 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein a [[the]] maximum limiting values ($M_{i\,max}$) as well as (T_{max}) are determined dynamically and independently via a number (A_v) of considered sale transactions and a [[the]] future limiting theoretical value is determined via an incremental value (Δ M, Δ T).

Claim 13 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ further comprising generating the signal (F) if a [[the]] number of refund attempts over several successive sale transactions is determined, and ~~that if~~ a preadjustable limiting value of successive refund attempts is reached ~~then the fault signal (F) is generated~~.

Claim 14 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ further comprising activating a circuit arrangement ~~is activated~~ through the signal (F) by means of which an emergency notification/interference notification is initiated ~~by radio or GSM/telephone~~.

Claim 15 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 1, ~~characterised in that~~ further comprising activating a photographic medium with~~, preferably a digital camera,~~

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~~is activated by~~ the signal (F), by means of which an appearance of a [[the]] user of the vending machine is recorded.

Claim 16 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 10, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the time ~~(T_{v-v}) and/or~~ ((T_{max})$_n$) is adjustable ~~can be adjusted~~.

Claim 17 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the step of activating the logic circuit~~, i.e. the time element (T), acts in such a way a coin or banknote checking device that~~ further comprises preventing the acceptance of coins or banknotes of a specific denomination ~~this value is prevented~~ for a duration (T_{inop}).

Claim 18 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the duration (T_{inop}) of the time element (T) is adjustable ~~can be adjusted~~.

Claim 19 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the duration (T_{inop}) of the time element (T) has an incremental function, whereby ~~wherein the time~~ the duration (T_{inop}) in the case of successive attempts to commit fraud is in each case extended.

Claim 20 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that the~~ further comprising measuring a time interval (T_v) between two successive sale transactions~~;~~ ~~is measured~~ and

generating a signal (F) that prevents the operation of the vending machine for a duration (T_{inop}) [[that]] if a preset time (T_{v-v}) is not reached in one [[or]] of a predetermined number (A_v) of sale transactions (ΣT_v)~~, a signal (F) is generated that prevents the operation of the vending machine and consequently the sales for a duration (T_{inop})~~.

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Claim 21 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the times (T_v) between two successive sale transactions is measured, that in the case of several successive sale transactions their total time (T_{vs}) is determined,

that the time (T_{vs}) is compared to a limiting value ($(T_{max})_n$), and

that if this limiting value is not reached [[a]] the signal (F) is generated that prevents the operation of the vending machine and consequently the sales for a duration (T_{inop}).

Claim 22 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 20, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the time ($T_{v\text{-}v}$) and/or ($(T_{max})_n$) ~~can be~~ are adjusted.

Claim 23 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the maximum limiting values ($M_{i\,max}$) as well as (T_{max}) are determined dynamically and independently via a number (A_v) of considered sale transactions and [[the]] a future limiting theoretical value is determined via an incremental value (Δ M, Δ T).

Claim 24 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the number of refund attempts over several successive sale transactions is determined, and that if a preadjustable limiting value is reached then the fault fignal (F) is generated.

Claim 25 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein a circuit arrangement is activated through the signal (F) by means of which an emergency notification/interference notification is initiated by radio or GSM/telephone.

Claim 26 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 4, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein a photographic medium~~, preferably a digital camera,~~ is activated by the signal (F), by means of which the user of the vending machine is recorded.

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Claim 27 (currently amended): [[Method]] The method according to claim 21, ~~characterised in that~~ wherein the time ($T_{v\text{-}v}$) and/or ((T_{max})$_n$) ~~can be~~ are adjusted.

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